Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a packet at [[on]] a first switching device from a location operatively coupled to the first switching device, the packet for packet transmission to ~~a message from~~ a second switching device operatively coupled to the first switching device; and

receiving a message on the first switching device from the second switching device, the message indicating ~~that indicates~~ to slow packet transmission to the second switching device.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

slowing packet transmission from the first switching device to a congested port in the second switching device.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the message identifies a congested port in the second switching device.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the location is a port and the message identifies [[a]] the port in the first switching device transmitting packets to a congested port in the second switching device.

5. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

transmitting from a first switching device to a second switching device, operatively coupled to the first switching device, a message that indicates to slow packet transmission to the first switching device, the first switching device receiving

a packet for packet transmission from the second switching device, the packet received from a location operatively coupled to the second switching device.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5 further comprising:

transmitting the message from the second switching device to a third switching device.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the first switching device includes an application-specific integrated circuit.

8. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, tangibly embodied in ~~an information carrier~~ a computer readable medium, the computer program product being operable to cause a machine to:

receive a packet at [[on]] a first switching device from a location operatively coupled to the first switching device, the packet for packet transmission to ~~a message from~~ a second switching device operatively coupled to the first switching device; and

receive a message on the first switching device from the second switching device, the message indicating ~~that indicates~~ to slow packet transmission to the second switching device.

9. (Original) The computer program product of claim 8 being further operable to cause a machine to:

slow packet transmission from the first switching device to a congested port in the second switching device.

10. (Original) The computer program product of claim 8 being further operable to cause a machine wherein the message identifies a congested port in the second switching device.

11. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 8 wherein the location is a port and the message identifies [[a]] the port in the first switching device transmitting packets to a congested port in the second switching device.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, tangibly embodied in ~~an information carrier~~ a computer readable medium, the computer program product being operable to cause a machine to:

transmit from a first switching device to a second switching device, operatively coupled to the first switching device, a message that indicates to slow packet transmission to the first switching device, wherein the message is transmitted upon receiving a packet for packet transmission from the second switching device, the packet received from a location operatively coupled to the second switching device.

13. (Original) The computer program product of claim 12 being further operable to cause a machine to:

transmit the message from the second switching device to a third switching device.

14. (Original) The computer program product of claim 12 wherein the first switching device includes an application-specific integrated circuit.

15. (Currently Amended) A message manager comprises:

a process to receive on a first switching device a message from a second switching device that indicates to slow packet transmission to the second switching device, the first switching device operatively coupled to a port for packet transmission.

16. (Original) The message manager of claim 15 further comprising:

a process to transmit from the first switching device to the second switching device a message that indicates to slow packet transmission to the first switching device.

17. (Original) The message manager of claim 15 wherein the message identifies a congested port in the second switching device.

18. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a first switching device ~~capable of~~ configured to perform operations comprising,

transmitting a packet to a second switching device;

in response to receiving a message from [[a]] the second switching device that indicates to slow packet transmission to the second switching device, slowing transmitting the packet to the second switching device.

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 18 wherein the first switching device is further ~~capable of~~ configured to perform operations comprising:

transmitting to the second switching device a message that indicates to slow packet transmission to the first switching device in response to receiving a packet from the second switching device.

20. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein the message identifies a congested port in the second switching device.

21. (Original) A packet forwarding device comprising:

an input port for receiving a packet;

an output port for delivering the received packet; and

a first switching device ~~capable of~~ configured to, ~~receiving~~ receive a message from a second switching device that indicates to slow packet transmission to the second switching device in response to receiving the packet from the input port, the packet for transmission to the output port.

22. (Original) The packet forwarding device of claim 21 wherein the first switching device is further capable of:

transmitting to the second switching device a message that indicates to slow packet transmission to the first switching device.

23. (Original) The packet forwarding device of claim 21 wherein the message identifies a congested port in the second switching device.

24. (Original) A network switch comprising:

a first application-specific integrated circuit (ASIC) capable of receiving a message from a second ASIC that indicates to slow packet transmission to the second ASIC.

25. (Original) The network switch of claim 24 wherein the first ASIC is capable of transmitting to the ASIC a message that indicates to slow packet transmission to the first ASIC.

26. (Original) The network switch of claim 24 wherein the message identifies a congested port in the second ASIC.